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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights Association, a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 February 2019]

* Issued as received, in the language(s) of submission only.



Violations committed against Arabs children in conflict areas

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Maat for Peace, Development and Human Rights affirms its appreciation to the report of the Secretary General Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict; on the dangers and forced participation of children in the armed conflicts. Maat stresses that children in armed conflicts in the Arab region are shameful and regrettable. States engaged in conflicts in the region, whether in active participation or financing, as well as armed groups, do not abide by the rules of international law and international humanitarian law in protecting children from the dangers of armed conflict.

First: In the occupied Palestinian Territories: Maat for Peace affirms its rejection to the Israeli practices against the Palestinian people in general and against children in particular. The statistics published by HRW confirmed that, as of October 31, Israel had detained 220 Palestinian children¹. On February 8, 2019; the Palestinian Ministry of Health announced that the occupying forces shot 2 children during the 46th Friday's march of return. As well; it announced that since the beginning of 2019 till 6th of February the Israeli attacks left 29 children wounded.

Second: In Yemen: Houthis militias which are funded by Qatar & the Islamic Republic of Iran, allied forces and other armed groups, used children as soldiers. Till June 2018; there was 305 cases of children recruited as soldiers by Houthis militias documented²; whose ages ranges from 10 to 17 from Sana'a, Dhamar, Amran and Hajjah. Finally, on February 2, 2019, al-Asma.net website documented the killing of a 15-year-old boy by al-Houthi militia, who has been kidnapped by them a week before his death. Militias shot him while traveling to visit his father.

Third: In the Syrian Arab Republic: children suffers from violence and all kinds of exploitation during military operations. An attack by Syrian government forces on November 24, 2018 near a primary school, killing six children, a teacher and a student's mother appeared illegal and indiscriminate. Approximately 10 children and 3 adults were injured. It is well noted that the random attacks that may cause the death or injury of civilians or an attack with the knowledge that it could cause incidental civilian casualties, injury or damage when committed with a criminal intention constitutes a war crime. The organization therefore appeals to all parties of the conflict, including the Syrian-Russian military alliance and non-state armed groups, to ensure the protection of children and civilians from any attack.³

Finally, Maat for Peace agrees with the statement by the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict that all children associated with the parties to the conflict who are in the context of security operations should be treated primarily as victims rather than as risks to security and therefore the risks and harms to kidnapped and recruited children who were subjected to violence at an early age; must not be violented more but must be rehabilitated and integrated.

Recommendations

- The parties to the conflict must abide by the rules of international law for the protection of children against violence, abuse and exploitation and the risks of armed conflict.
- The obligation of all states to stop and prevent the financing of armed groups that use children and recruit them to avoid international criminal accountability while pursuing criminal prosecution to prevent their impunity.

¹ <https://www.hrw.org/ar/world-report/2019/country-chapters/325797>، منظمة هيومن رايتس واتش، الرابط،

² For more see: <https://goo.gl/A8Xqzh>

³ سوريا: هجوم على مدرسة يوقع قتلي ويخرق القانون، هيومن رايتس واتش، 11 يناير 2019، الرابط، <https://www.hrw.org/ar/news/2019/01/11/326157>

- Maat stresses on the importance of the issue of the reintegration of children to ensure long-term peace and security.
 - The imminent need to urge States concerned to take appropriate measures to reintegrate those children who have been associated with armed groups, paying special attention to the needs of girls while providing the necessary political, technical and financial support for reintegration programs.
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